Acquiring coke mines abroad

607. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian steel industry is facing a serious problem due to steep hike in coke prices and non-availability of the raw materials;

(b) if so, whether Government plan to acquire coke mines abroad to overcome the short supply of raw materials;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether discussions have been held with the Ministry of Coal in this regard; and

(e) if so, the outcome of the discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The Indian steel industry is facing shortages in the supply of metallurgical coal and coke as well as high prices of these raw materials due to overall increase in demand for steel.

(b) and (c) Government has no immediate plans to acquire coking coal mines abroad. However, steps are being taken by Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) to establish reliable sources of supply for metallurgical coal/coke in India and abroad and several proposals, thereof, are under consideration of SAIL.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Supply of raw materials to VSP

608. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Visakhapatnam Steel Plant of RINL is going to hit massively on profitability due to rise in input costs and non-availability of raw materials;